

European Association for Solar Telescopes



Ing. Jan Fischer, CSc.
Prime Minister of the Czech Republic
Office of the Government of the Czech Republic
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To: His Excellency, the Primer Minister of the Czech Republic

Dear Primer Minister,

I have read with a lot of concern the article that appeared last July in the renowned journal *Nature*, where it was described that a change in the distribution of funds for science in the Czech Republic has been discussed and approved by the cabinet of your country. According to that article, the new criteria for fund allocation may have a strong impact in science development, with a budget reduction that might reach up to 45% within the next 3 years. This point of view has been confirmed by some Czech astronomers whom I have had the chance to meet.

As President of the European Association for Solar Telescopes (EAST), a consortium formed by institutions involved in Solar Research from fifteen European countries, and Coordinator of the European Solar Telescope (EST) Design Study, a project approved and funded by the EU under FP7, I would like to express my biggest concern about the influence this decision will have on the future of Czech science, in general, and on that of Czech solar astronomy, in particular

The Astronomical Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences has a long tradition in collaborating with institutions of many countries at the highest scientific level. Their participation in the design of the 4-meter EST, in which nine European countries are working together to accomplish the fantastic goal of gathering efforts and unifying the ground-based high-resolution European Solar Physics, is an example of this first-line collaboration.

I kindly ask the Czech government to reconsider the budget reduction decision and keep the funding of the Academy of Sciences at a level that will ensure the scientific position that this institution deserves, in Europe and in the world.

Yours sincerely,

M. Collados

President of the European Association for Solar Telescopes
Coordinator of the European Solar Telescope